



WISCONSIN

DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Division of Economic Support
Bureau of Work Support Programs

**TO: Economic Support Supervisors
Economic Support Lead Workers
Training Staff
Child Care Coordinators
W-2 Agencies**

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PRIORITY: HIGH

SUBJECT: CARES CLIENT NOTICE REDESIGN (CNRD)

CROSS REFERENCE: CARES Guide
http://workweb/des/manuals/cares_guide/default.htm

EFFECTIVE DATE: February 26, 2001.

PURPOSE

This memo provides an overview of the new structure and organization of the client notice that was implemented over the weekend of February 23, 2001. As part of Phase 1 of the Client Notice Redesign project, certain aspects of the client notice will be changed. The client notice will not only have different look to it, but it will also contain new information.

BACKGROUND

The Client Notice Redesign (CNRD) Project grew out of a long-standing interest to enhance the understandability and effectiveness of CARES generated client notices. Soon after the implementation of CARES, there emerged an interest to improve the style and substance of the client notice. This concern led to the development of a Client Notice task force, charged with analyzing problems and issues, and developing options for solving them, including new technology. A business advisory group consisting of representatives of various business areas, local agencies and interested parties was established to guide CNRD development. This group meets on a monthly basis and provides oversight and focus in addressing notice redesign issues. In addition to working on the design of notices themselves, this project has also served as an umbrella project for a number of changes/enhancements in other parts of CARES that affect data and information that is presented as output on CARES notices.

A major component of CNRD was a major client notice survey that was conducted in the spring of 2000. This survey gathered information from a variety of stakeholders, including a large number of workers and clients. The information gathered has helped define the scope, content

and scheduling of initiatives included in CNRD. This first phase of CNRD included several of the most requested changes requested by workers that were possible within current system architecture.

NOTICE CHANGES

Phase 1 changes to the content and structure of notices include splitting the notice into two sections, adding summary text and eligibility information, and reordering/restructuring other information in the notice.

- Introduction/Summary (New)
- Section 1

Eligibility Summary (New)
Reduction of Repetitive Text

NOTE: This Introduction/Summary and Section 1 will display only once per set of notices. If a set of notices is sent in more than one envelope, the first page of the second and subsequent envelopes will not display these parts.

- Section 2

Implementation of a new sort order for individual notices
Attachment of Budgets to the appropriate individual notice text
Expanded Reason Codes

INTRODUCTION/SUMMARY

The new notice begins with an Introduction/Informational Summary, which introduces the purpose and content of the notice, and replaces information formerly included in the footers. This introductory piece has been labeled CNES. CNES consists of 4 parts:

1. Salutation
2. Introductory paragraph briefly describing the 2 sections of the notice.
3. Disability statement, formerly in a footer.
4. Statements regarding appeal and fair hearing rights, formerly in a footer.

SECTION 1

ELIGIBILITY SUMMARY

The first part of Section 1 contains an easy to read summary of benefits that is displayed starting on the first page of the notice. This is displayed in the form of a table and uses codes to inform participants of their eligibility status. This table will include only those programs for which a participant has applied and where the eligibility for that program has been confirmed.

The eligibility summary will make the notice more user friendly by giving participants immediate access to eligibility results in a format that is easy to access and read, yet detailed enough to let them know their eligibility status for each program of assistance for which their eligibility determination is complete.

A sample of this Eligibility Summary table is shown below:

Section 1 – Notice Eligibility Summary

This sentence explains the meaning of the codes used in the table.

In the Summary Below, “Y” means you are eligible; “N” means you are not eligible, or did not apply for assistance; “M” means you are eligible if you meet a Medicaid deductible.

	Feb 2001	March 2001	April 2001
Food Stamps			
Adult 1	Y	Y	N
Child 1	Y	Y	N
Benefit Amount \$	50	75	0

For each month the benefit has been requested, 1 of the 3 codes is used to show the eligibility results.

The individuals who have applied for benefits are listed here, by benefit type.

PROGRAM SPECIFIC TEXT

Although the centerpiece of section 1 is the Notice Eligibility Summary table, there is another piece to the section. In an effort to reduce the repetitive display of some of the program specific text that have been repeated throughout the current individual notices, three of the most common ones are now displayed just once as part of section 1, immediately following the summary table. The 3 text items that will be included in section 1 are:

1. Description of the usage and purpose of the Wisconsin Quest card when eligibility is approved for Food Stamps (FS).
2. Description of the usage and purpose of the Wisconsin Forward card when eligibility is approved for Medicaid (MA).
3. Description of the procedure for obtaining authorized Child Care (CC) when eligibility is approved for CC.

SECTION 2

Section 2 of the new notice package contains the individual notices and budgets that are generated via confirmation for each program of assistance for each month the benefit is requested. This section is essentially what existed prior to the implementation of this Phase of CNRD.

NEW SORT ORDER

There are important changes to this section to note, however. First, the notices are sorted in a different order. There are basically two sort orders at work here. The first sort is based on eligibility status. The first set of notices to appear in section two will be approval notices, followed by closure and denials. Within each category of eligibility status, a second sort occurs based on program of assistance, and this is an alpha sort based on the name of the program. Within program of assistance, notices are listed by effective month, with the earliest months appearing first.

NOTE: If an assistance group is eligible for at least 1 month, all notices for that AG will be included in the eligible group.

Example: if, for a 3 month period of requesting FS, there is only 1 month of approval, the notices for all 3 months will be included in the “Approved” section.

A second significant change in Section 2 is that each notice is immediately followed by its corresponding budget. Prior to the implementation of CNRD, budgets were grouped together at the back of the notice. In addition, budgets have been modified to include the dates for which the budget information is applicable. This date information can be found at the top of each budget, immediately under the name of the respective Program of Assistance.

EXPANDED REASON CODES

The individual notices that make up section two will in many cases contain reason codes for denials and/or closures. Reason codes can explain why an Assistance Group or Individual has closed or been denied, or is not eligible for benefits at application. Prior to phase 1 implementation, reason codes could only be 60 characters long, which greatly restricted the detail provided by the code. With Phase 1 implementation, reason codes can now be 240 characters long, greatly expanding the capacity for detail.

Not all reason codes will be expanded under phase 1. For existing reason codes, the 59 most frequently set codes were chosen for expansion. In addition, 74 new reason codes have been developed for phase 1 as part of an effort to replace the 028 (No person meets program requirements) reason code. This expanded text, along with some other details about the codes, for the 59 existing codes and the 74 new codes can be found in Appendix 5 of the CARES Guide.

NOTICE HEADER

The Header of the notice has also been changed. Because notices can be sent out in more than one envelope (only 5 sheets of paper can be stuffed into 1 envelope) the text “ENVELOPE XX” has been added to the header. If more than 1 envelope is needed for the mailing of notices, the header on the very first page of the notice will include “ENVELOPE 01”, while the header on the very first page of the second envelope will include “ENVELOPE 02” and so on. It is hoped the inclusion of this additional information will alert the recipient to expect more than one envelope of notices.

NOTE: If only 1 envelope is needed, “ENVELOPE 01” will still appear in the header of the first page. If there is more than envelope, the first page in each envelope will include the basic header information, and because the informational and eligibility summary sections appear only once for each set of notices, the first page of the second and subsequent envelopes will include the traditional footer information.

SEPARATION OF INFORMATION

Finally, each separate notice and its corresponding budget will be separated from the preceding and following notice by a double dotted line, rather than the conventional single dotted line. Hopefully this will create a better visual division between the individual notices.

CONTACT AND INFORMATION

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Note: Email contacts are preferred.